GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2410
ANSWERED ON:31.07.2017
Development of Tourism in Meghalaya
Pala Shri Vincent H

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to utilise the Mekong Ganga Cooperation in supporting the development of tourism in the North East and in India as a whole;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to develop tourism in Meghalaya and if so, the details thereof; and
(d) whether the Government has any plans in co-operation with the Ministry of Civil Aviation to revamp the Shillong airport anytime soon to increase tourists flow in the State and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) to (b): The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is an initiative by six countries − India and five ASEAN countries, namely, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam for cooperation in tourism, culture, education, as well as transport and communications.

Activities for enhancing cooperation under the MGC frame work are guided by an MGC Plan of Action (2016-18). Tourism is one of the key components of the Plan of Action which includes exploring and tapping the potential in tourism, especially the Buddhist Trail, greater connectivity between Buddhist sites, cultural tourism, pilgrimage tourism, medical tourism, eco-tourism, community based tourism and adventure tourism. Private sector networking for tour packaging, marketing and promotion, and selling destinations in the region as a whole, is also encouraged.

As part of the efforts in enhancing cooperation in tourism, MGC partners were invited as "Guests of Honour" in the 5th International Buddhist Conclave which was held from 2-5 October 2016 in Delhi, Varanasi and Sarnath. 275 persons from 39 countries including prominent Buddhist personalities from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam participated.

(c): For development of tourism infrastructure in the country, the Ministry of Tourism has launched two schemes in 2014-15 i.e. Swadesh Darshan - Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits and PRASAD - Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive.

Under Swadesh Darshan scheme the focus is on development of theme based tourist circuits. Under this Scheme, thirteen thematic circuits including the North-East India Circuit have been identified for development. The Ministry has sanctioned Rs. 99.13 crore for the Development of Umium (Lake View), U Lum Sohpetbneng Mawdiangdiang − Orchid Lake Resort, Meghalaya in 2016-17 under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

(d): Ministry of Tourism has no specific plan to revamp the Shillong airport in cooperation with Ministry of Civil Aviation.

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